

Message

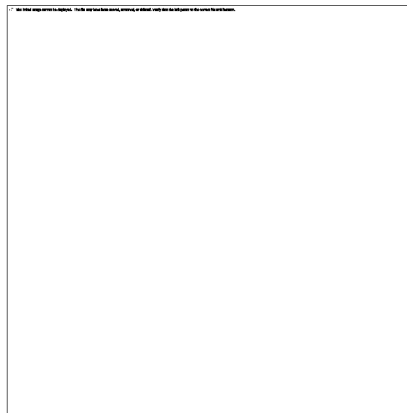
From: Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Sent: 9/30/2020 3:19:02 PM
To: Cascio, Wayne [Cascio.Wayne@epa.gov]
Subject: Fw: COVID In Context

Fyi...
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Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

On Wednesday, September 30, 2020, 9:48 AM, Chartr | Data Storytelling <daily@chartr.co> wrote:

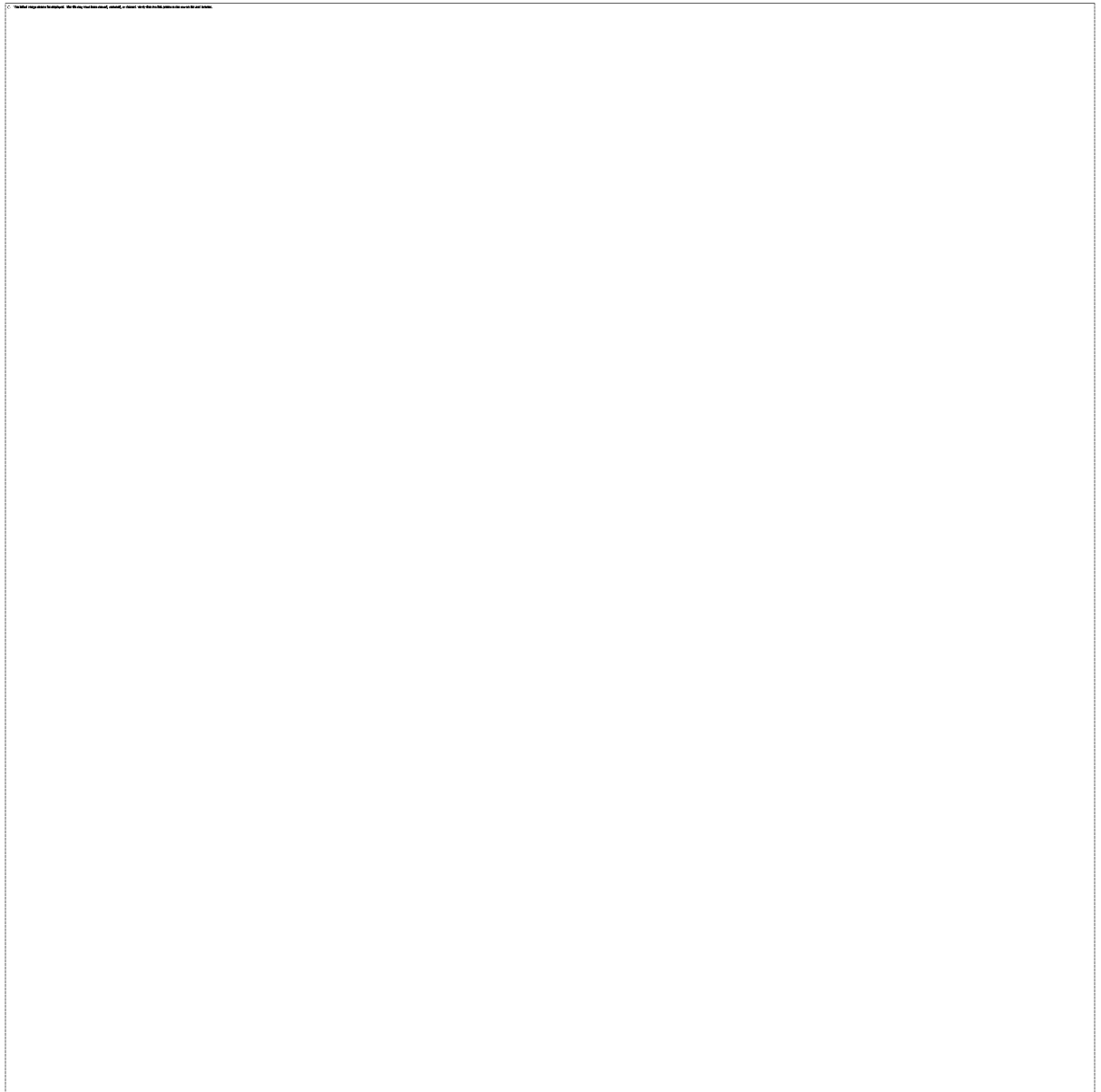


Today's Topics

3 charts & 5 snacks for you today:

- **COVID in context.** How does COVID-19 compare to other causes of death in the US?
- **BlackBerry.** The once-mighty tech company reported another quarter of revenue growth, after years of decline.
- **Among Us.** How the impostor game became a 'sleepor hit', blowing up to millions of players after 2+ years of obscurity.

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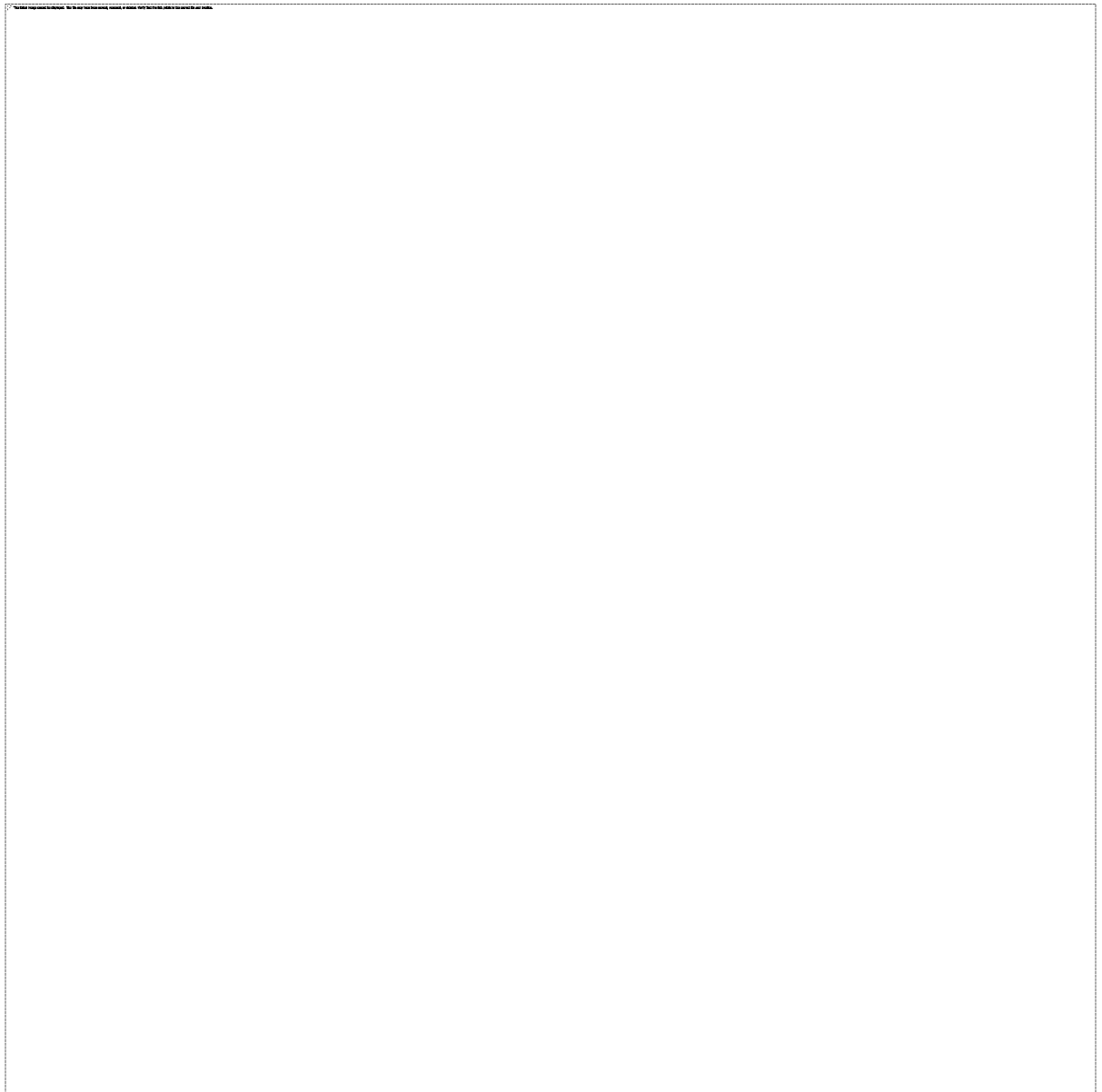
The US government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the topics most fiercely "debated" last night between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. We'll leave the debate analysis to someone else, but thought it was a good time to get some context on the human toll of COVID-19. How do you begin to wrap your head around 200,000 deaths in the US, and 1 million worldwide?

One way is to compare COVID with other illnesses and causes of death (fun topic we know). The latest data from the **CDC**, compiled by [USAFacts](#), suggests that **COVID** is likely to end up as the third biggest killer in 2020. Although thankfully not as deadly as **cancer** or **heart disease**, COVID-19 has killed roughly the same number of Americans as strokes and respiratory disease have *combined* since February.

Note: To make the comparisons fair (to catch up with data reporting lags), this isn't the *absolute latest* COVID count, but instead the count as of September 12th, which is why it isn't quite over 200,000 yet in the chart.

Public enemy number one

When it comes to public health cancer probably gets the most media attention, but it's actually not the biggest killer. In actuality **heart disease** is public enemy number one, accounting for the deaths of over **600,000 Americans every year**, which is **~25%** of all deaths.



A technology company reporting a rise in revenue isn't exactly news (particularly in 2020). That is, unless the company is **BlackBerry**. Once the smartphone market leader, BlackBerry was the aspirational phone for millions of people, just as the iPhone — which first outsold the BlackBerry in 2008 — is today.

The bigger they are...

In 2011 BlackBerry's revenue peaked at just shy of **\$20bn**. If you had asked analysts and investors at the time, many surely would have picked touchscreen phones as the most likely

format to dominate the industry, but even the harshest critics of **BlackBerry** might not have expected revenues to fall **90%** in just 5 years. So dramatic was the collapse in demand for BlackBerry, that in 2016, just 5 years after selling more than 50 million smartphones in a year, they stopped making their own smartphones altogether.

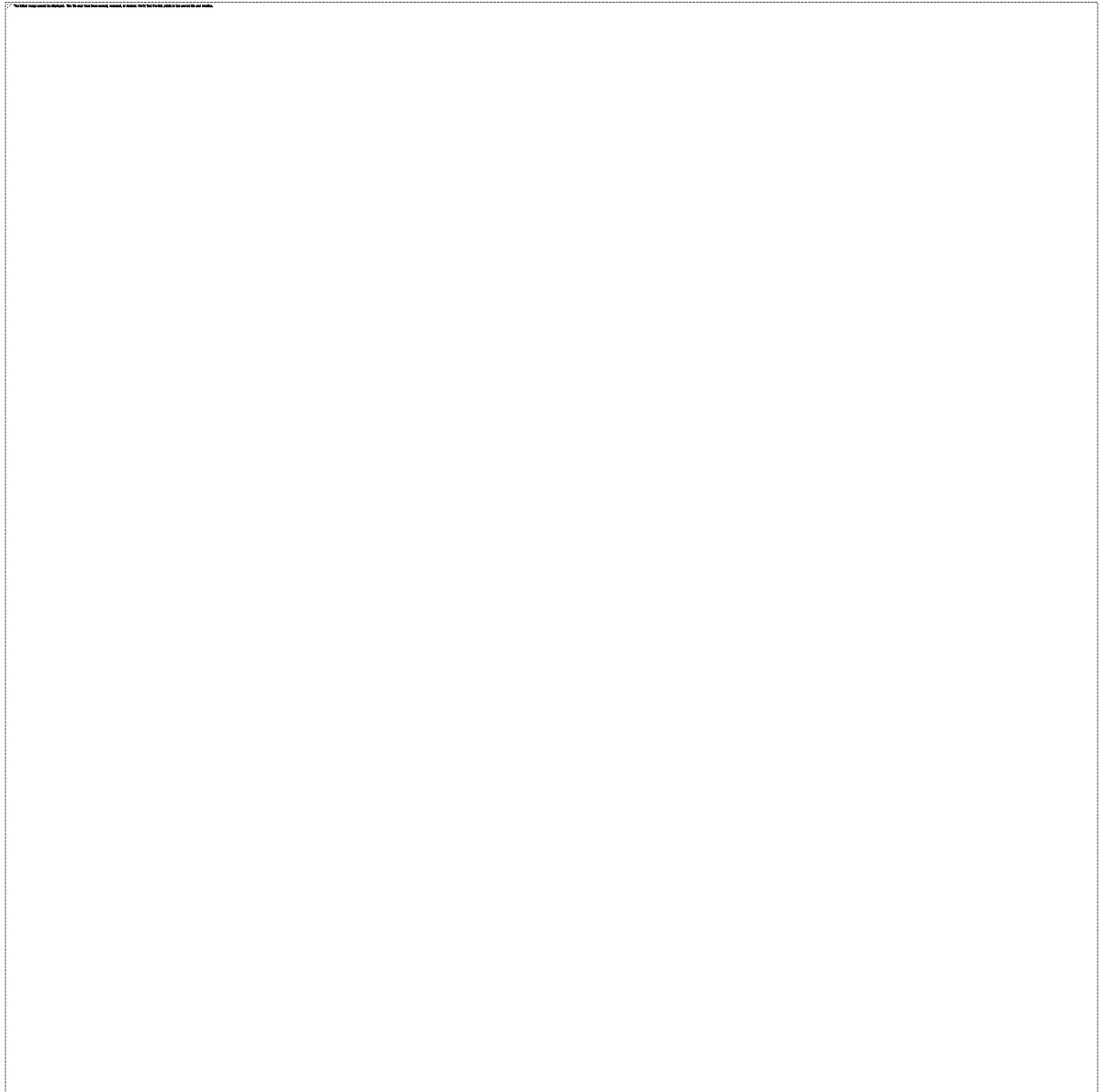
Keyboard till I die

The iconic physical keyboard of a BlackBerry smartphone is often blamed for the company's demise, as consumers wanted bigger and bigger screens and the keyboard sort of 'got in the way'. That's certainly true, but BlackBerry's demise wasn't for lack of trying. In **2008** they attempted to jump on the touchscreen bandwagon with the BlackBerry Storm. Although it sold well initially, the Storm lived up to its name and was a complete disaster — with the 1 million units shipped in 2008 almost all requiring replacement thanks to a faulty touchscreen.

A phoenix from the ashes?

Not exactly. BlackBerry's modest jump in revenue barely registers on our chart of its history, and the company itself is no longer even in the business of making phones, instead **BlackBerry** now sells "intelligent security software and services to enterprises and governments around the world". Having said that, BlackBerry does license out the use of its brand and some of its IP, and there is supposedly a new 'BlackBerry' phone coming out next year... and yes it's going to have a keyboard.

PS: Data nerds... how cool is it that BlackBerry's revenue chart looks like a normally distributed histogram? Very "cool".



When game studio **InnerSloth** first released the game **Among Us** in 2018, they may have been a little disappointed. Similar to games such as Mafia or Werewolf, Among Us is a fairly classic social deduction game, with players split into 2 groups. There are **crewmates**, who try and identify impostors and **impostors** whose goal it is to kill the crewmates without being identified. Sounds like a fairly compelling premise, but in its first 6 months **Among Us** would typically only have around 10 players playing it at any one time on Steam — not exactly a viral hit.

Twitch changes everything

By the summer of 2020 Among Us had grown steadily in popularity to around ~1000 players, before being picked up by a number of notable Twitch streamers, who began to play the game to their thousands of followers. In just over 2 months the game grew its player base 100x again, peaking at over **400,000 concurrent players** on Steam this week, with more than 3 million across all platforms over the weekend.

Whether you play a lot of games or not, the video game streaming platform Twitch (along with the other competing platforms) is probably one of the most interesting case studies of modern marketing and distribution.

Create for the creators

Making a game that's the most fun to play isn't the sole objective any more if you want to maximise your chance of selling millions of copies. Making a game that's fun to play *and* watch is. Making a game that's really fun for content creators to play for their audiences is a good way to save your company millions of dollars in marketing budget. The same is true of TikTok and the music industry where a 15-second clip of a song can go viral in a matter of hours. Create for the creators.

Data Snacks

1) Disney has announced they will cut 28,000 jobs, mostly at US theme parks. The job cuts come after **Disney reported** an **85% fall** in its Parks, Experiences and Products division revenue in its most recent quarter.

2) Palantir is going public today, with shares in the company expected to start trading at around **\$10 per share**, which would value the secretive data platform at a little over \$22bn. If

you missed our analysis of the Palantir biz model from a few weeks back you can [catch up here](#).

3) Trump's taxes have been getting a lot of media attention. One revelation from the NY Times report is that the **National Doral golf course** has [lost him \\$162m in just 6 years](#). Lots of people have tried to justify spending money on the game of golf, but that surely takes the cake.

4) **FarmVille** is on its way out. Your aunts and uncles may still be able to send you lots of invitations to play, but only until December 31st, when the [game will shutdown for good](#). At one point the classic Facebook game had **73 million** unique monthly users - more than the entire population of the **UK**.

5) A recent poll suggests that **86%** of voters have [already made up their mind](#) about how they will vote in the upcoming US election — suggesting around **14%** could still be up for grabs.

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